

JOINT COMMITMENT TO ACHIEVE SHARED WATER GOALS

December 11, 2001

State agencies and EPA have accomplished much over the past 30 years to ensure clean and safe water for the American public, but there is much more to be done. The States and EPA are committed to building on these achievements through our strong federal/state partnerships and reporting on the progress we make in protecting and improving the environment.

Over the past year, the EPA Region 5 Water Program and the six States have worked closely to develop a set of five shared environmental goals to enhance our joint efforts to protect and restore our valuable water resources and to measure our accomplishments. The enumeration of measurable goals is a significant step in collectively defining our long-term vision for clean and safe water.

Purpose and Intent

We have developed shared goals in order to report our progress in terms that reflect environmental conditions, trends and results. We will continue to work together to refine and agree to shorter term milestones and indicators. By having shared goals, we will:

- strengthen our efforts to implement the philosophy of the National Environmental Performance Partnership System (NEPPS), which promotes joint priority setting and planning through the increased use of environmental goals and indicators.
- \$ measure more systematically our progress to continually protect and improve water quality.
- \$ report more comprehensively and consistently to the public and environmental decision-makers on the status of surface and drinking water resources in the Region.
- \$ target more effectively our programmatic work, specific activities, and collective resources to improve water quality and to focus on the most significant water problems.
- \$ document resource needs and spotlight programs that are particularly effective.
- \$ implement Lake-wide Management Plans (LaMPs) and Remedial Action Plans (RAPs), and the Great Lakes Strategy more effectively.

We believe that the shared goals will result in better integration of water activities and enhance our ability to measure and report more directly on the changes in water quality at a regional level. We also believe these goals will improve our effectiveness by focusing our efforts and defining our unique roles in order to eliminate cross-purposes and duplication.

Our shared goals are intended to give a regional picture of water quality trends and programmatic achievements and, therefore, are not intended to be used as state-specific grant performance commitments.

Roles and Responsibilities

The States serve as the primary agent for delivering environmental results. States will have the flexibility to design strategies and activities and direct and invest resources where they are most needed to meet the shared goals, disinvesting in other activities as appropriate.

The EPA Region 5 Water Program provides expertise, assistance, capacity building to States and Tribes; provides a regional perspective on issues that cross political/state boundaries; and ensures that all States provide fundamental public health and environmental protection.

EPA Region 5 will have the lead in reporting on the shared goals, as well as milestones and indicators as they are agreed to. EPA Region 5 will strive to collect information using existing databases and other reporting vehicles and analyze the information for trends. Where data gaps exist, we will collectively determine whether additional data and data reporting systems are needed and whether, as a result, disinvestments in other areas are necessary. EPA Region 5 will work closely with the States and other appropriate agencies for quality control and to ensure appropriate interpretation and presentation of the results. The EPA Region 5 Water Program will develop and implement strategies to help achieve the shared goals that complement State strategies and activities.

The States and EPA are collectively accountable for meeting the shared goals. As appropriate, we will also work with other state, federal, and local entities to achieve our goals. The States and EPA will use the goals as a framework to direct available resources and implement appropriate actions to achieve the environmental results. The States and EPA agree to link activities contained in Environmental Performance Partnership Agreements (EnPPAs), water program work plans and/or applicable strategies to the shared goals. The shared goals will help set priorities and drive State/EPA strategies and activities.

The States and EPA Region 5 recognize that strong monitoring and quality assurance programs are critical to measure accurately water quality status and trends, and will work together to improve State monitoring programs. Within their existing authorities and resources, the States and EPA agree to strive to meet data collection and analysis needs to measure our progress against the shared goals.

Refinement of the Goals

As part of our commitment to these five shared goals, we also commit to work together, and with other appropriate partners, to develop, test, and agree to milestones and indicators. We recognize that over time some of the indicators and milestone targets supporting our shared goals may be changed as we gauge their value and collect additional baseline data.

In signing this document, the States and EPA will jointly strive to achieve these five environmental goals and work together to identify and target our activities, strategies and available resources to meet these goals.

Shared Water Goals for Region 5

Goal 1: All waters in Region 5 will support healthy aquatic biological communities.

Goal 2: All waters in Region 5 will support fish populations with safe levels of contaminants.

Goal 3: Designated swimming waters in Region 5 will be swimmable.

Goal 4: All people in Region 5 served by public water supplies will have water that is consistently safe to drink.

Goal 5: The quantity and quality of critical aquatic habitat in Region 5, including wetlands, will be maintained or improved.

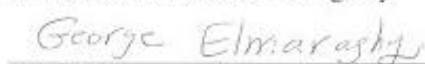

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

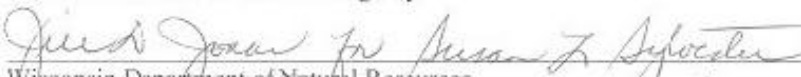

Indiana Department of Environmental Management

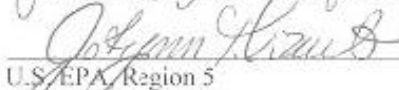

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality


Minnesota Pollution Control Agency


Minnesota Department of Health


Ohio Environmental Protection Agency


Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources


U.S. EPA Region 5


U.S. EPA, Great Lakes National
Program Office